

A Guide to the Sixth Form at Congleton High School



For Parents and Carers

Congleton High School Sixth Form Guide for Parents and Carers

Now that your son / daughter is in the Sixth Form, you may be experiencing some uncertainty about your new role. You may be unsure whether your active involvement is still sought or required and yet you are anxious to be encouraging and supportive.

At Congleton High School Sixth Form we believe that parental support is extremely valuable in ensuring a student's success and that lack of it can lead to considerable difficulties. However we also want to encourage students to develop into mature, self-motivated learners so much in demand from universities and employers. We are therefore keen to work in partnership with you to help your son or daughter to assume full responsibility for their own learning.

We have therefore suggested some areas in which your involvement and help would be most beneficial.

The Structure of the Sixth Form

Students are assigned to a Tutor Group of about 22 students in the care of a Form Tutor. The students meet each day for Registration. At Registration notices are given out, messages given to individual students and students have the opportunity to discuss any aspect of school life or personal problems with their Form Tutor. There will also be enrichment activities for students to participate in, to develop personal, social and study skills. It is therefore essential that Year 12 students attend EVERY Registration.

Each fortnight students spend an hour with their Form Tutor in a Guidance period, which may involve attending a lecture on careers guidance or Personal and Social education, or remaining in the form room for reviews of progress or essential administrative work. Attendance at this session is compulsory.

Contact with school

Your first point of contact is your child's Form Tutor. It often proves very convenient to email them rather than telephoning. Their email addresses are:

(12 FWJ) stafffwj@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk;
(12GD) staffgd@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk;
(12JHY) staffjh@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk;
(12KMA) staffkma@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk;
(12JBO) staffjbo@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk.

If they are unable to resolve your query, you can contact the Sixth Form Management Team:

Mrs Newton is the Year 12 Guidance Team Leader and will deal with any queries relating to this year group (staffjn@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk). Mrs March is the Director of Sixth Form. She can help with queries relating to year 13 and university applications (staffwm@congleton.cheshire.sch.uk). We also have a sixth form administrator who will endeavour to deal with any queries or can take a message for us to call you back at a time convenient to both parties.

Contact with home

Informal: We tend to telephone parents if there is a problem – e.g. lack of attendance, problems with work etc.

Formal: Quick reports are issued every 10 weeks.

Target setting day – Thursday 10 November

Parents' Evening – Thursday 8 March

A Mentoring Meeting to discuss progression from AS to A2 takes place in June.

Sixth Form Curriculum

Most sixth form students follow 3 or 4 AS courses in Year 12, taking their exams in May 2012. They will then usually continue with 3 A2s in Year 13.

Variations:

- A tiny minority of students may take 5 ASs or 4 A2s.
- Students who have not got B grades at GCSE will follow our Level 2 package of intermediate courses, which will enable them to get GCSEs or GCSE equivalents.
- Some students following a Level 2 programme of study may also take an AS in a subject for which they have a particular talent.

Implications:

- At the start of year 12, students sometimes feel that a course isn't for them and ask if they can change to a different subject or drop the subject.
- Students requesting to change a subject should complete a **Change of Course** form which the subject teacher, parents and the Sixth Form Guidance Team Leader must sign.
- If a student wishes to drop a subject at any stage of the course we encourage them to seriously consider the implications of this:
 - a) Applying to university or for a job can be highly competitive. Students must beware of putting themselves at a disadvantage.

- b) We encourage our students to aim high.
- c) We urge our students to challenge themselves and would be disappointed if they gave up a course simply because they found they had to spend time and effort on their studies.
- d) Our curriculum is flexible. Some students may pick up a new AS level in Year 13, as an addition to their studies, or to replace one of their original A2 level choices.

Other features of the curriculum

Option K – Enrichment Courses:

All Sixth Form students participate in our programme of Enrichment courses. We have worked hard to establish a programme of courses that complement and provide a contrast to the student's main programme of study. We aim to ensure that students are interested in our programme and that they are motivated to participate and succeed in the courses. Attendance at Enrichment lessons is compulsory.

In Year 13, students have been given the option of completing supervised study each Tuesday afternoon, in place of attending an Option K lesson. This is in recognition that the heavy work-load they face requires applied and committed study from them. Attendance at Supervised Study is compulsory.

PASS – Personal Achievement and Service Scheme:

This is an in-house scheme to ensure that students are involved in activities beyond the scope of their academic studies and are rewarded for good attendance and punctuality. Please see the Student Planner for further information.

Time and effort required for success

The most frequent difficulty that students encounter lies in the transition from GCSE to Advanced work. At Congleton High School we help students to come to terms with new demands and different ways of working. Help is available from Subject Teachers and Form Tutors and students should not hesitate to ask for help and advice when necessary. It is also at this stage that parental understanding and encouragement may be most needed. If you feel that your son or daughter is experiencing difficulties, please let the Sixth Form leadership team know.

Independent study

- Students should expect to do at least 5 hours of independent study (i.e. homework) per subject, per week. We consider that the time spent in formal lessons (c.20 hours a week) plus the time they spend on independent study should equate to a full-time job of 40 hours a week.
- If they are only doing 3 subjects, they should do **at least** 6 hours per subject, per week.
- Independent study in the Sixth Form may be written work, but students are also expected to do a considerable amount of extra reading, ensuring that they read around the subject to enhance their knowledge.
- Therefore, if your son / daughter says that they have no work to do:
 - They may not be doing the work set thoroughly enough.
 - They may well be lying to you!
 If they are constantly saying that they have no work, please let us know and we will investigate for you!

Student Concerns

When a student is not working to an appropriate standard, we follow our Student Disciplinary procedure (see Appendix for the version issued to students). This is a staged process whereby we explore the reasons for the student's difficulties and try to put solutions in place, through discussions with the student. This is initially done with the Subject Teacher, then the Curriculum Team Leader before being passed to the Form Tutor and / or the Sixth Form Guidance Team Leader.

Where we feel that students may benefit from assistance in managing their time so that they give sufficient time to studying or where their performance is giving us some concern, we may add Supervised Self-Study periods to their timetable. This means that students must report to a designated room where they will be required to study.

If students continue to progress through our Disciplinary Procedure, we will contact parents / guardians to involve them in the process. Ultimately, if the student is unable to implement improvements, it may be decided that they would be better pursuing their studies elsewhere or seeking employment.

Part-time jobs

If your son / daughter takes his / her time in the Sixth Form seriously and is completing the required amount of work, they will find that the two years are hard work and, at times, extremely tiring. Sixth Form studies SHOULD be the equivalent to a full-time job. It is therefore worthwhile considering very carefully whether it is wise for them to also take on a part-time job. Please note that research has proven that Sixth Form students completing over 12 hours a week in a part-time job WILL find this to be detrimental to their studies.

Attendance

- Year 12 students must be in school from 8.45am to 3pm every day. A high level of attendance is crucial to success. If students take time off for relatively trivial reasons they will find it difficult to 'copy up' work.
- We consider that an attendance rate of 100% is excellent attendance, 97% is good and 94% is satisfactory. We will implement our Disciplinary Procedure if a student's attendance was to become a cause for concern and ultimately this may lead to us asking them to leave the Sixth Form (please see the Appendix for the version of the Disciplinary Procedure issued to students). The attendance rate is based on ALL school sessions – main subject lessons, Option K lessons, Registration, Self-Study periods and Guidance periods.
- We ask that students inform their Form Tutor and Subject Teacher in advance of any known absence by completing a Leave of Absence Form.
- If your son or daughter is absent from school, please telephone school (01260 387000) by 8.30am to let us know.
If a student has been absent and did not telephone, they must bring a note from parents to explain their reason for absence to their Form Tutor. The relevant section in the Planner can be used for this.
- Unauthorised absences will be recorded in the student's file and may appear in reference material.

- If you are happy for your son/daughter to leave the premises at lunch-time and breaks and will take responsibility for them at this time, please indicate this on the appropriate page of the Planner.
- Home Study privileges are granted to Year 13 students if parents and school agree that they have earned the privilege.
- Students should not arrange driving lessons, part-time work etc between 8.45am and 3pm.
- Students should try to arrange medical appointments out of school hours.
- We ask that you avoid taking family holidays during term-time as this will be detrimental to your son / daughter's progress. If this is absolutely unavoidable, students should request a Holiday Request Form at least four weeks in advance. The Dates for your Diary section at the back of this booklet will help you with their planning.

Summer term 2011

- AS exams are USUALLY between the middle of May and the end of June. However, the exam board timetables remain provisional until very late. Confirmed timetables will be given to students as soon as they are available.
- Some students sit modules in November and / or January. Subject teachers will inform students if this is the case. **You should avoid booking holidays at these times.**
- As soon as AS exams are over, we begin to teach the A2 course. Therefore, **the 5 or 6 weeks after AS exams until the end of the summer term are NOT a suitable time to take family holidays or to allow students to go away with friends.**

Punctuality

Registration begins promptly at 8.45am. Year 12 students are expected to arrive on time and we ask for your assistance in ensuring that they leave home promptly each morning and arrive punctually. We will implement the Disciplinary procedure if a student's punctuality becomes a cause for concern (please see the Appendix at the end of this booklet for the version of the Disciplinary Procedure issued to students).

Behaviour

Sixth Form Procedures

The behaviour that we expect from Sixth Formers is outlined in the Sixth Form Code of Conduct which is included in the Student Planner that has been issued to every sixth former in September 2011. There are a number of procedures that we expect sixth formers to follow to ensure they are successful in their studies, safe, aware that they are role models for the rest of the school and show respect for every other member of the school and wider community. We would like to draw your attention to the following points:

Smoking

We will not tolerate any student smoking on or very near to the school premises. Any Sixth Former doing this will be dealt with through the Sixth Form Disciplinary Procedure.

Rewards

We will endeavour to acknowledge effort, attainment, attendance and punctuality of students on our achievements noticeboard, through contact with home and in our praise assemblies.

Dress code

- Students do not wear a uniform but should dress with work in mind. Jeans, t-shirts and trainers have proved to be favoured by everyone!
- In summer, we ask that skirts and shorts are no shorter than knee-length. Students are asked to avoid brief tops and clothes that show cleavage or belly buttons.
- Hair should be 'normal' in colour and style.
- Facial piercings are not considered to be 'suitable for a work environment'.

Identity badges

Sixth form students are required to wear their ID badge at all times when on school premises.

Plans after school

The Connexions Personal Adviser is available in school. Students may request an interview time or can use the 'drop-in' sessions at lunchtime.

It is PARTICULARLY important that students who do not wish to go to university make early contact with the Connexions Adviser.

University

- In February / March of Year 12, we start encouraging Year 12 to think about going to university and we take them to an HE convention.
- We encourage everyone to apply to university. If a student is in doubt, we encourage them to apply, as it is easier for them to change their mind against university later in Year 13 than to regret not applying.
- In Autumn of Year 13 they complete their UCAS application. We set an internal deadline for completion of the form of mid-October. Students applying for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and Oxbridge must apply even earlier.
- We will issue advice about financing university studies and applying for tuition fees etc in year 13.

Dates for Your Diary

September

Wed 7 First day in school for Year 12 – Induction Day
Thurs 8 Year 12 AS lessons begin

October

Mon 24 - Fri 28 Half Term Holiday
Mon 31 Students return to school

November

Thurs 10 Target setting day
Thurs 17 Post-16 Open Evening for Year 11

December

Mon 19 Dec – Christmas Holiday
Mon 2 Jan

January

Tues 3 INSET– School closed to students
Wed 4 Students return to school
Tues 10 AS/A2 January Exams begin

February

Mon 13 – Fri 17 Half Term Holiday
Mon 20 Students return to school

March

Thurs 8 Sixth Form Parents Evening

April

Mon 2 – Fri 13 Easter Holiday
Fri 20 INSET– School closed to students

May

Thurs 3 AS MFL tests begin
Mon 7 Public Holiday. School closed.
Tues 8 Students return to school
Mon 14 AS exams begin

June

Mon 4 June – Half Term Holiday
Fri 8 June
Mon 11 Students return to school
Fri 15 (tbc) AS exams end
(tbc) Year 12 Mentoring Day
(tbc) Year 12 students return to school to begin A2 courses

July

Mon 23 INSET– School closed to students
Tues 24 Summer Holiday begins

August

Thurs 16 AS results issued

Appendix

Sixth Form Student Disciplinary Procedure

Rationale

All students have the right to learn and a responsibility to allow others to learn in a safe, secure and respectful environment. We therefore ensure that we follow certain principles in all that we do so that we support the learning process and promote acceptable conduct at all times:

- Anything you and we do should not be detrimental to your own or anyone else's education.
- Anything you or we do should take your and others' health and safety into consideration.
- We work in a community and need to ensure that we respect every member of that community and that they respect us.
- We have to remember that in our community there are lots of younger children who follow your example.
- We want to treat all students fairly.

We aim to work constructively with you to resolve disciplinary issues but we must recognise the need to disapprove of, formally record and, in certain circumstances, punish unacceptable conduct which disrupts learning or shows disrespect.

Student Disciplinary Procedure

During induction the Student Concerns and Disciplinary Procedure will be explained to you. If there is anything you do not understand, do not hesitate to ask your Form Tutor or Guidance Team Leader to explain the procedure to you.

Definition of Unacceptable Conduct

Any academic or non-academic conduct which adversely interferes with teaching and learning, is disrespectful to other members of our school community or property or breaches the Sixth Form Code of Conduct.

Sixth Form Code of Conduct

The Sixth Form Code of Conduct applies to all CHS related activities whether on school premises or off site including work experience or enrichment activities.

- You must behave in a reasonable manner at all times respecting other students, staff, visitors and property. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.
- You must behave appropriately in the Common Room – e.g. keep it clean and tidy, use all furniture in the way it is intended to be used, respect other students in the room, not play ball games.
- You must behave appropriately in the Study Room – e.g. maintain it as a quiet workroom, do not eat or drink in it, use computers only for studying.
- You must observe all health and safety regulations.
- You must give in all work set on time and completed to an acceptable standard.
- You are expected to attend and be on time for all time tabled sessions, (comprising your main Programme of Study, Option K sessions, Registration and Guidance), and for appointments. If for any reason you cannot attend, you are required to complete a Leave of Absence slip.
- You must ensure that the required equipment to undertake your course programme is brought with you e.g. pens, writing pads, homework etc.
- Unauthorised use of personal music players or mobile phones is not allowed during class time.
- You must switch your mobile phone to 'off' mode when in class.
- You must not use your mobile phone or personal music player when walking around the school building. The only suitable place to use your phone is in the Sixth Form Common Room.
- You may only eat and drink in the Common Room, the

canteen and the Sixth Form café. Bottled water is permitted in classrooms with the exception of IT areas, including the Study Room, and Science laboratories.

- The internet is for educational use only. You must not: download or install any executables (programs, screen savers etc); change any system settings; send or receive anything that may cause offence to others.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden on any part of school premises, at the school entrances and in areas off-site but near to school premises.
- Possession of any offensive weapons will lead to disciplinary action and where necessary, there will be Police involvement.
- The use of alcohol is not permitted.
- The possession, misuse, sale, purchase or distribution of controlled drugs as classified in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is strictly forbidden.
- Disciplinary action will be taken if you are knowingly under the influence of alcohol or controlled drugs and where necessary, there will be Police involvement.
- You must not accompany any individuals who do not attend CHS onto school premises without having been granted permission by the Sixth Form GTL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Examples of Disciplinary Incidents

The examples below cover the main areas for concern which would lead to the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure being applied. Depending on the nature of the incident, one or more of the early stages of the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure may be by-passed to allow an appropriate response to be made in each individual case.

EXAMPLES OF STAGE 1 DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS

The first identified instances of:

- Poor attendance or punctuality

- Late or non-submission of course related work/ assignments
- Disrupting the learning of others
- Lack of commitment to academic work, such as producing poor quality work.
- Disrespectful behaviour to other students, staff or visitors
- Eating or drinking in the Study Room or disturbing other students from studying in the Study Room
- Misuse of the Common Room
- Misuse of the internet/IT equipment
- Unauthorised use of personal music players or mobile phones when in class

EXAMPLES OF STAGE 2 DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS

- Repetition of a Stage 1 disciplinary incident
- Breach of health and safety regulations
- Smoking on or near school premises

EXAMPLES OF STAGE 3 DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS

- Failure to comply to a Stage 2 action plan
- Repetition of a Stage 2 disciplinary incident
- Stage 2 incidents occurring in more than one subject
- Moderate cases of academic misconduct

EXAMPLES OF STAGE 4 DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS

- Repetition of a Stage 3 disciplinary incident
- Serious cases of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism
- Demonstration of aggressive behaviour/discrimination/ harassment/bullying
- Misuse of CHS resources
- Interference with CHS property

EXAMPLES OF STAGE 5 DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS

- Repetition of a Stage 4 disciplinary incident
- Threats to health and safety such as the misuse of fire alarms and fire extinguishers
- Any criminal offence including:
 - Being in possession of illegal substances or alcohol
 - Endangering or causing injury to others
 - Possession of an offensive weapon
 - Theft or fraud
 - Wilful damage to CHS property
- Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled drugs on CHS premises or whilst engaged in any CHS related activities
- Bringing CHS into disrepute

THIS LIST IS NEITHER EXCLUSIVE NOR EXHAUSTIVE

Student Disciplinary Procedure

Where breaches of discipline occur such as failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or any incident of academic misconduct, the following procedure will be used.

Stage 1

- Your Subject Teacher (or Form Tutor when the issue relates to Registration/ Guidance/ general conduct around school) will discuss the incident or issue with you and negotiate a realistic short-term target with you.
- Brief details of the incident will be recorded on the PARS system and kept on your record throughout the duration of your time at CHS Sixth Form.

Stage 2

- A formal interview will be arranged between you and your subject teacher (or the Form Tutor when the issue relates to Registration/ Guidance/ general conduct around school).

- An Official Verbal Warning will be given, noted on PARS and kept on your record throughout the duration of your time at CHS Sixth Form.
- The interviewer will set a course of action for improvement within an agreed timescale and outline the consequences of further misconduct or poor academic performance.
- A letter will be sent to inform parents that an Official Verbal Warning has been given and of the action plan.
- Your progress against the action plan will be reviewed by the initial interviewer within three days of the deadline date.

Stage 3

- Staff will log an SFD3 on PARS. Your Form Tutor will be notified.
 - Your Form Tutor will request information about you from all Curriculum Areas of the subjects you study.
 - If the issue relates only to one subject, the Form Tutor will refer it back to the CTL for them to deal with. If it is an issue affecting all your subjects or relating to your general conduct around school, your Form Tutor will deal with it.
 - You will then meet with the appropriate interviewer to discuss the issue. Your parents may be invited to this meeting. The interview may
 - result in no further disciplinary action being taken – for instance, if there is a legitimate mitigating circumstance (e.g. health/ personal problem etc) confirmed by parents/ medical evidence.
- OR**
- result in a First Written Warning being issued and kept on your record throughout the duration of your time at CHS Sixth Form.
 - The First Written Warning will set a course of action for improvement within a realistic, agreed timescale

and outline the consequences of further misconduct or poor academic performance.

- A letter will be sent to inform parents that a First Written Warning has been given and of the action plan.
- Your progress against the action plan will be reviewed by the CTL/ Form Tutor, as appropriate, within a week of the deadline date.

Stage 4

- Staff will log an SFD4 on PARS which will notify the Sixth Form Guidance Team Leader.
- A formal interview will be arranged between the Sixth Form GTL and you. Your parents will be informed of the meeting and will be invited to attend.
- The interview may result in no further disciplinary action being taken (see Stage 3) or in a Final Written Warning being issued, noted on PARS and kept on your record throughout the duration of your time at CHS Sixth Form.
- The Final Written Warning will set a course of action for improvement within a realistic, agreed timescale and outline the consequences of further misconduct or poor academic performance. Consequences may include your removal from one of your chosen courses.
- The Sixth Form GTL will ensure that details of the action plan are copied to you and your parents within 2 working days of the interview.
- A meeting to review progress against the action plan will be arranged with you within a week of the deadline date.

Stage 5

- A hearing will be undertaken and adjudicated by the Director of Sixth Form. The hearing will be recorded on PARS and kept on your file throughout the duration of your time at CHS.

- The hearing will be arranged at a time that ensures you and your parents will be available to attend the hearing and you will be given details of how the alleged behaviour contravenes CHS's Sixth Form Code of Conduct.
 - The Director of Sixth Form will determine the outcome on the evidence available. The hearing may result in no further disciplinary action being taken, a requirement for an appropriate course of action to be taken or a recommendation that you be excluded for a fixed period or permanently.
 - A letter detailing the outcome of the Stage 5 Hearing will be issued to you and your parents within 5 working days. If you have been excluded for a fixed period or permanently, the letter will also contain information on a student's right of appeal.

Notes

- A key role of the Sixth Form Disciplinary Procedure is to identify **patterns** of misconduct, for example, failure to meet deadlines in more than one subject, **repeated** failure to meet deadlines in one subject, regular lateness to lessons or school. This means that your progress through the later stages of the procedure is viewed holistically (i.e. across all subjects and across all of your conduct whilst in the sixth form) rather than each element of your studies being viewed as a separate entity.
- Progression through the stages continues throughout your time in each year of the sixth form and SFDs are not 'written off' at the end of each term.

Right of Appeal

All students have the right to appeal against decisions taken.

An appeal will only be heard on the following grounds:

- Conclusions drawn from the hearing were not sufficiently supported by the available evidence.
- The outcome was disproportionate to the misconduct.
- Relevant new evidence has come to light.
- The procedure was operated unfairly to the student's disadvantage.

Appeals should be lodged with the Headteacher's PA within 5 working days of the date on the letter of exclusion or withdrawal from the course. The Headteacher will decide whether an appeal is justified and should there be valid grounds, a Student Appeals Panel Hearing will take place within 5 working days of the appeal being lodged and be chaired by the Headteacher or a senior postholder not involved at any earlier stage. Details on how the appeal will be conducted will be forwarded to the student with the date of the Student Appeals Panel Hearing. You may be accompanied by a parent/carer/relative /fellow student. If no appeal is made within the notice period, there will be no further opportunity for your case to be heard.

Probationary period

As a condition of entry onto a course programme, you may be required to undergo a six week probationary period during which time, should it be considered that you are not suitable to continue, a Stage 4 interview will be called. Where appropriate, the probationary period may be extended. Curriculum Team Leaders may also require you to undergo a probationary period in their subject. A letter will be sent to inform parents when a probationary period has been set.

Suspension

Suspension may occur for a single incident without re-course to the early stages of the student disciplinary procedure. CHS suspends without prejudice and makes no presumption of guilt.

You may be suspended for the following reasons:

- To enable CHS time to fully investigate an incident.
- Where CHS judge the risk of you continuing at that time to be too high.
- Pending a criminal investigation.

You will be asked to leave the premises immediately under supervision.

A Letter of Suspension will be issued to your parents within 2 working days stating the nature of the incident and the duration of the suspension.